

Renata Iwicka

Play Your Roles! Trickster as a Liminal Character in Supernatural

The television series *Supernatural* (cw) gave fans a plethora of characters to love and care about, be they human or non-human. Among all of them, the character of the Trickster appears to be by general consensus one of the most liked,, and yet he remains a shadowy, mysterious figure. This essay aims to reconstruct the meaning and use of such a popular figure in the world of the mythology created by the television series. I agree that the Trickster is a liminal character¹ thriving in a threshold of space and time, standing between (or maybe even outside of) the dualities of good and evil, human and inhuman, chaos and order, or the significant phases of life. The figure of a trickster (to differentiate the general concept from the character of the Trickster which appears on *Supernatural*, written with the capital T) appears in various cultures around the world, and in countless guises: as an animal such as a coyote, crow, rabbit, fox, spider, snake, or hyena, either as a human or non-human (Shakespearean Puck) or as a deity (Loki). Therefore, I will begin with presenting a short outline of the figure of a trickster in order to juxtapose the Trickster from *Supernatural* with it and explain his function within the series' story frame.

Arpad Szakolczai, while analyzing real-life, political tricksters (such as Hitler, Lenin, or Stalin) writes that in general they:

[...] are always marginal characters: outsiders, as they cannot trust or be trusted, cannot give or share, they are incapable of living in a community; [...] having no sense of shame; they are not taken seriously, given their affinity with jokes, storytelling, and fantasizing².

-
- 1 In this essay, I adopted Victor Turner's theory of liminality: V. Turner, *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti structure*, transl. E. Dzurak, Warszawa 2010; A. Szakolczai, *Liminality and Experience: Structuring transitory situations and transformative events*, "International Political Anthropology" 2009, Vol 2, pp. 141–172.
 - 2 A. Szakolczai, *Liminality and Experience: Structuring transitory situations and transformative events*, "International Political Anthropology" 2009, Vol 2, p. 155.

His observations sum up the trickster figure known to folklore – he usually lives on the fringes of the society, cannot be trusted, and has extremely rich imagination. He can also be compared to the Waldenfels' concept of the Other, especially to the aspect of the "participating observer". The trickster fulfills the role of a guide, distributor, and arbiter³. This proves true when analyzing *Supernatural's* Trickster. In one of the episodes he acts exactly as a guide (explaining the bizarre situations to the Winchester brothers), a distributor (he delegates tasks), and finally as an arbiter since it is up to him when and how the game will end.

There is also another interesting point that Ayana Smith makes when describing the somewhat elusive figure of the trickster in blues music and African-American literature. She states that:

[o]ften this character embodies a limitation of some sort, one who is likely to be trod upon by others with more power or physical strength. Thus, it is superiority in wit that allows the trickster to gain the upper hand⁴.

I will refer to this remark later, when discussing the Trickster from *Supernatural*. It is, however, worth mentioning that trickster in an animal form is almost exclusively represented as a small and weak creature, for example as a rabbit (Br'er Rabbit, very popular in the American South) or a spider. I would argue that even as a coyote (the most popular among certain indigenous Native American groups) the trickster represents a weaker form. Real coyote has natural enemies – mainly wolves and humans – but bears and even buffaloes can also cause a deadly stampede when the need arises. African hyenas are usually not considered to be brave animals, too.

This proves that a trickster in an animal form represents physical inferiority and, despite the fact that he may possess hidden weapons (like poison, fangs etc.), he is nearly always a smaller animal which has much larger natural enemies.

When analyzing the trickster figure, one also ought to turn to Carl Gustav Jung who wrote:

[a] curious combination of typical trickster motifs can be found in the alchemical figure of Mercurius; for instance, his fondness for sly jokes and malicious pranks, his powers as a shapeshifter, his dual nature, half animal, half divine, his exposure to all kinds of tortures, and last but not least – his approximation to the figure of the savior⁵.

3 B. Waldenfels, *Podstawowe motywy fenomenologii obcego*, transl. J. Sidorek, Warszawa 2009, p. 124.

4 A. Smith, *Blues, criticism, and the signifying trickster*, "Popular Music" 2005, Vol. 24, No. 2, *Literature and Music*, p. 179.

5 C. G. Jung, *On the psychology of the trickster figure*, trans., P. Radin, New York 1972, p. 135.

The trickster figure is a disruptive one; he challenges the status quo, overpowers it, wielding an almost god-like power over it, and yet he is often subdued and vanquished by the same forces he works against. His shape-shifting abilities are another characteristic trait often mentioned in various folk traditions (in Asian legends fox turns into a beautiful, but bloodthirsty woman; Anansi from African lore takes the form of both a spider and a man⁶), as well as his affinity for cruel pranks. Jokes may be done just for fun, but in many stories there is one common, underlying theme, namely teaching a life lesson via the prank, no matter how malicious. The stories about the trickster may be perceived in such case, as anecdotes.

Trickster is an elusive figure, moving swiftly between paradigms and definitions, living in the liminal spheres and moments. Such a character appeals to human nature because it defies confines of human body and mind. The trickster knows no boundaries and no morality apart from his own. He belongs to the liminal sphere, bringing with him destruction and catharsis. The fact that he encompasses many seemingly contradictory qualities, makes him a perpetual hero of many stories in many different times and places. There is nothing surprising that such a nebulous figure found its way into the galaxy of the various characters in *Supernatural*.

In the television series⁷ *Supernatural*, the Trickster appears for the first time in the 15th episode of the second season that is entitled *Tall Tales*. The character appears in a total of five episodes (2x15: *Tall Tales*, 3x11: *Mystery Spot*, 5x08: *Changing Channels*, 5x19: *Hammer of the Gods*, and 9x18: *Meta Fiction*) and is one of the most popular recurring characters. One of the alluring qualities of the television series is the appearance of the characters every week, which gives the audience a sense of familiarity and builds a relationship between the viewers and the protagonists. The emphasis on character development, reminiscing about past events that happened off-screen, various relations, as well as the trials and tribulations of the characters' lives (especially in the case of a multi-seasonal series) creates the depth that regular viewers and fans are interested in. It also forges the illusion that there is much more to the characters' lives than their one hour of air time. It expands the inner world of the series and allows the viewers to actively participate in the lives of the characters⁸. The writers are well aware that what

6 More: K. Yankah, *The Akan Trickster Cycle: Myth or Folklore?*, African Studies Program Indiana University, 1983.

7 The distinction between "series" and "serial" has become so blurred, it is common to call every multi-episode, often multi-seasonal production a "series". More: M. J. Porter, D. L. Larson, A. Harthcock, K. B. Nellis, *Re(de)fining narrative events: Examining television narrative structure*, "Journal of Popular Film and Television", Vol. 30, pp. 23–30.

8 The most recent being *Game of Thrones*, spawning myriads of fan theories regarding the various characters, especially when season 5 ended. The most notorious and popular one is cryptically called "R+L=J", explaining the birth secret of Jon Snow, never addressed directly either in the first five books or tv series.

lures the viewers the most are the characters and their relationships, so they try to meet these expectations. When fans are no longer interested in characters, the series dies.⁹

Since the 1990s, television has undergone a complex change in storytelling methods. As Jason Mittell puts it: “[...] I believe that American television of the past twenty years will be remembered as an era of narrative experimentation and innovation, challenging the norms of what the medium can do”¹⁰. He admits that there are problems and faults in the system (like much hated and outdated standard of Nielsen ratings), but television still remains a powerful tool for storytelling¹¹. The creators of the *Supernatural* were perfectly aware of this, although it took some time to establish cult status the show can now boast of (the series was even on the brink of cancellation). The relationship between the the Winchester brothers serves as, without any doubt, a gravitational pull of this show. The first five seasons can be analysed as a closed and complete unit – the full story leads towards Armageddon, culminating in the dramatic and self-sacrificial *Swan Song*. The creators went one step further though, taking the story behind the lines of the Apocalypse “that came and went”¹² and nobody noticed. The Winchester brothers destroyed the plan which created chaos in both Heaven and Hell, prompting a struggle for power and authority in both realms. From 6th season onwards, the series may be classified as post-apocalyptic, even though the world seemingly remained intact.

The *Tall Tales* narrative follows a similar technique used by Kurosawa in his *Rashōmon* movie¹³. The brothers investigate the death of a professor, and the events quickly spiral into the grotesque and the insane. Unbeknownst to them, the town is the hiding place of the Trickster who plays a practical joke on them, while at the same time playing deadly pranks on people who, according to witnesses, deserved to be punished. There are three cases¹⁴: an ethics professor jumps to his death from his

9 Worth mentioning is the latest uproar over the series *Castle* (ABC), when the station fired Stana Katic, a main female lead, and promised a new season 9 without her; fans took it to SNS demanding the cancellation in such a case. In May 2016 ABC cancelled the show, although it is uncertain whether this was due to fan pressure or not.

10 J. Mittell, *Narrative Complexity in Contemporary American Television*, “The Velvet Light Trap” 2006, Vol. 58, p. 29.

11 However, describing the status of television as a medium lies beyond the scope of this article and is far more complex than the quote above suggests.

12 Those words are used by the being called Eve in the season 6. She is shown as the Mother of every monster that ever roamed the Earth.

13 The movie *Rashōmon* (1950) is based on two short stories by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke: *In the Grove* and *Rashōmon*. The former tells about the same event as recalled by a few people, each of whom has their own version of the truth.

14 The number 3 seems to be a recurrent motif whenever Trickster is concerned. In this episode there are three victims: in *Mystery Spot* – the prank played on Sam is also threefold: Dean dies, Dean is

office when faced with the rotting body as an embodiment of his own questionable morals (taking the shape of a young, female student); a fraternity student, who enjoys bullying his juniors as a pledge master, is abducted by aliens; and finally a research scientist who performs tests on animals is devoured by an alligator in the sewers. The narration is problematic in this episode. The brothers describe the events to their friend Bobby from their own points of view, each one trying to make himself look better (this leads to a few hilarious scenes with the actors making fun of their own characters). Meanwhile, the tragic events are filmed in a specific way, mainly from a low point (knee or hip high). Especially the main college hall is usually filmed from the ground, giving the impression of an ominous and threatening building. The second event fits the grotesque situations so often attributed to the Trickster's doing: the student recounts his abduction, he gives the standard description of the usual tests performed on the abductees (a nod to *The X-Files*, no doubt), when suddenly he states that the aliens made him do something far worse than just submit to multiple probing. He says: "They made me... slow dance." The scene cues to the disco ball and Chris DeBurg's *Lady in Red* song to which the student and an alien are slow dancing. This shatters the narrative, brings out laughter and fun. Two other victims died, and all three events fit the description of the pranks that a trickster is known to play on others – they are often deadly, but he also seeks to ridicule and humiliate his victims. The episode is disruptive, mischievous and puzzling – it looks like a joke played on the audience by none other than the Trickster himself. The Trickster can conjure up nearly everything, and the episode leaves space for some doubt – what if there was no death and all those events were just a pure illusion created by the Trickster to test the mettle of the Winchester brothers? If that was the case, the Trickster would not only ridicule his victims (real or not), but also Sam and Dean, causing mischief and making them fight with each other over trivial things (hiding a laptop, puncturing the tires, etc.).

As mentioned earlier, a trickster is often characterized by some physical inferiority. The Trickster is played in *Supernatural* by Richard Speight Jr. Compared with both brothers, he is visibly shorter and manifests neither muscle power nor physical strength. Yet he manages to outsmart the Winchesters. Hence he might be considered the best casting choice for the character. He plays his Trickster standing on the blurred lines between good and evil, explaining everything and at the same time hiding even more – the viewers cannot be entirely certain that he speaks the truth, and it is even harder to decipher his emotions or the true purpose of the trials he throws both brothers into. The episode ends with the Winchesters and Bobby leaving the

seemingly saved, Sam's revenge fuelled life after Dean's and Bobby's death; in *Changing Channels* – three types of television productions (a show, variety and advertisement), he has three older brothers: Michael, Lucifer, Raphael.

town, dumping the Trickster's corpse into an empty lecture hall. The narration then moves back to the Trickster's true nature. The body fades away and the real Trickster appears, invincible and triumphant, eating a chocolate bar.

The next two episodes share a similar plot construction resembling a trap. Both brothers are lured to the place where the unexplained phenomena took place. *Mystery Spot* creates a time loop trapping Sam Winchester in a perpetual Tuesday when Dean dies over and over again. *Changing Channels* creates an alternate spacetime, modeled after the typical television broadcasts where there are "300 channels and nothing's on". He puts both brothers to a test in which they are only partially successful. It is this challenge that seems to be the most intriguing here. In lore The Trickster is a divine character, one which may even be called a demi-god. The Trickster-the Winchesters relationship is unequal: it is he who demands, decides, and sets the rules. He tests them, without mercy or personal gain. The trials serve as a cathartic moment for both brothers.

Mystery Spot belongs to the 3rd season that deals with Dean's last year on Earth before dying. The Winchesters find themselves in a small town where the laws of physics are bent¹⁵, and during a night escapade to check the surroundings Dean is shot to death. This causes Sam to wake up – it is Tuesday again and, despite avoiding the previous events, Dean dies. Another Tuesday, another death, and so on. After some time Sam realizes that this time-loop was devised by the Trickster, whom both brothers thought dead. Trickster explains to exhausted and desperate Sam the true purpose of the whole situation, which is to familiarize him with a world without Dean. Immediately afterwards, he plays his cruelest trick yet – he cons Sam into thinking they are safe, just to lose Dean again, only this time there is no waking up. The viewers watch three months of obsessive, meticulous, and cold hunt for the Trickster. Dean's death created a void in Sam's life – it took away his humanity, creating a soulless, focused and brutal, yet effective hunter¹⁶. The Trickster plays his last prank on Sam tricking him into thinking he really killed Bobby, ultimately breaking him. Sam learned his cruel lesson, so when he wakes up on Wednesday, he is relieved to see his brother alive, urging him to leave the town. The Trickster wins again.

The Winchester brothers are stubborn learners, which is why they find themselves stuck in TV land in the 8th episode of the Season 5. The episode is, at the same time, very meta-narrative, poking fun at some other popular real-life series such as *CSI: Miami*, *Knight Rider*, *Grey's Anatomy*, and variety of other shows, sitcoms, and even advertisements. Firstly, they play doctors on the parodic inside-show *Dr. Sexy M.D.*,

15 The Trickster plays his jokes on other people here. He explains that the man whom the brothers came to find, wanted to debunk wormholes, so he threw him into one.

16 This could be viewed as a premonition of things to come in Season 6, when Sam returned from Hell soulless.

and, as it soon turns out, they actually have to act like doctors when Dean is shot by the desperate husband of a patient. However, the most emotional segment is, without doubt, the Japanese variety show called *Nutcracker*. The brothers are immobilized on two platforms with a lever ending with a ball, suspiciously placed in front of each of them. The host asks Sam the first question in Japanese: “What was the name of the demon you chose over your own brother?”¹⁷ to which he has no answer and is punished – the lever hits him between his legs, causing an explosion of laughter from the studio audience. The moment is repeated in slow-motion from a few different angles (as in the real variety show). The technique and montage causes the viewers of *Supernatural* to smile or laugh as well, offsetting the horrible question that was asked¹⁸. When the host asks Dean, “Would your mother and father still be alive if your brother had never been born?” Sam advises him to play the role similarly to how he performed a surgery earlier, which Dean proceeds to do despite knowing no Japanese. He answers “yes”, probably not knowing what he had just said¹⁹.

Sam’s inability to answer that question implies something more than just his unfamiliarity with Japanese. The game show is the Trickster’s subversive game that involves both brothers’ deep, unpleasant or even downright ugly thoughts, in which everyone around participates and laughs not only at the Trickster and his troupe of fictitious characters, but also at the viewers of the television series. The Trickster manipulates the viewers into laughing, even though the subject matter is somewhat dark and sober. He uses Japanese variety show format to achieve this aim – such shows consist of ludicrous settings with crude humor often spiraling into hysterics. While watching this scene, the viewers become a part of the deception and they have to deal with a powerful blow delivered by the grotesque show. This was probably the cruelest trick played on both brothers, a perverse joke that ridiculed them and yet at the same time reminded the audience about the dark part of the human psyche represented by the Winchesters. This moment tapped into the deepest, darkest, and unspoken fears of both brothers, laying bare their secrets they had kept to themselves. This fleeting moment of horrible self-discovery is doused with the colorful and amusing setting of a variety show, and the contrast serves to amplify the potency of these scenes²⁰.

The Waldenfels’ Other in a threefold role is visible during one dialogue between the Winchesters and the Trickster:

17 *Supernatural*, episode *Changing Channels*, (cw, 2005–).

18 Viewers remember the dark path Sam was on during the previous season that led to freeing Lucifer from his cage. Sam did choose the demon Ruby over Dean for a moment.

19 *Supernatural*, episode *Changing Channels*, (cw, 2005–).

20 The show rarely and wisely used such contrast to deliver more impact than it would have otherwise: in the 4th episode of the Season 5, *The End*, during the scene with soldiers shooting at the infected people, a song entitled *Do You Love Me* by The Contours is used, creating a powerful and memorable scene.

Sam: We need to talk to you. We need your help.

Trickster: Hmmm. Lemme guess... you two mutton-heads broke the world, and you want me to sweep up your mess.

Sam: Please, just five minutes. Hear us out.

Trickster: Sure. Tell you what. Survive the next 24 hours, we'll talk.

Dean: Survive what?

Trickster: The Game!

Dean: What game?

Trickster: You're in it!

Dean: How do we play?

Trickster: Oh... you're playing it.

Dean: What are the rules?

(Trickster wiggles his eyebrows and disappears)

Dean: Oh, son of a *bitch*²¹.

During this short dialogue, the Trickster agrees to discuss the problem if the Winchesters go along with his game. He outlines the time period and the endgame, yet purposefully does not explain the rules, knowing that if the brothers figure them out themselves, the impact will be much more profound. On the other hand, this could stem from the Trickster's sense of humor and him being playfully mean to Sam and Dean, nothing more.

However, the Trickster myth stays true to its paradigm. *Changing Channels* is the very episode where the Trickster is tricked, and his true nature is revealed: one more Archangel is introduced to the apocalyptic scene – Gabriel²². However, there is one interesting fact regarding the show's Gabriel, namely that he displays features of a liminal personae. At first it may seem that he works against the Winchesters, forcing them to face the roles they were destined to play ("Sam, starring as Lucifer! Dean, starring as Michael! You're Celebrity Deathmatch! Play your roles!"²³), but he quickly removes himself from one side and stands on his own, giving the brothers much needed push and encouragement. He is neither on the side of Heaven nor Hell, probably liking the Earth as it is, with humans he can trick from time to time and play around.

He may be perceived as fickle, although this shift proves that even as an Archangel he retained his nature of a trickster, for a short moment deceiving even Lucifer, just

21 *Supernatural*, episode *Changing Channels*, (cw, 2005–).

22 It would be interesting to re-define the Archangel Gabriel as seen in various modern pop-cultural media, where he often appears as a disruptor, a rebel or a downright traitor and a rogue (*The Prophecy*, *Constantine*, *Legion*, *Dominion* [a TV series based on *Legion*] etc.). In *Supernatural* he is the only Archangel displaying empathy for the humanity and actively helping Winchesters to defy Lucifer and stop the Apocalypse.

23 *Supernatural*, episode *Changing Channels*, (cw, 2005–).

before being counter-tricked by him in the episode *Hammer of Gods*²⁴. This episode shows the demise of Gabriel, leaving the viewers with questions regarding the credibility of this event – could it be that he had performed yet another trick and somehow survived? Episode entitled *Meta Fiction* suggests that it is indeed possible for Gabriel-Trickster to be alive, proving once again how powerful he really is. When the angel Castiel learns that the events he went through were just an illusion, it remains unclear who created them. Most likely it would be Gabriel, because he had done so before, and it fits his *modus operandi*. It is also the last episode when he appears in person. In the most recent 11th season, God mentions Gabriel and states that he is dead. The truth remains clouded because throughout the whole series, Gabriel proved to be one of the most resourceful, intelligent, and powerful beings, learning his tricks from both God and Lucifer. This also coincides with Ayana Smith's description of a trickster as a weaker character, overpowered when it comes to physical strength, but dominant in the area of wit and intelligence. If Gabriel is indeed dead, it would fit the trickster lore as well – i.e. the Japanese fox often has to pay for his tricks with his life. But it might be also that Gabriel-Trickster either somehow managed to elude God, or God knows exactly where the youngest Archangel is, but is hiding the truth for his own reasons (or Gabriel's safety?). That would mean Gabriel had deceived even Lucifer.

The *Supernatural*'s Trickster is a difficult character to analyse, mainly because of his dual, liminal nature – he *is* a trickster, but he *is* also the Archangel Gabriel, and it is nearly impossible to discern where the Trickster ends and the Archangel begins. Among the Pagan gods he is known as Loki, a trickster god from Norse mythology (who, ironically, starts the Norse Apocalypse), which means his age as the Trickster is undetermined. He might as well be a proto-trickster, the paradigm for every such character in the world. Witty and sarcastic in the extreme, self-protecting, playing punitive tricks on everyone he deems fit, he could have spawned every other myth involving a shape-shifting trickster, guiding humanity and dispensing wisdom through various cruel yet elaborate pranks. The Archangel Gabriel is different from his celestial brothers in many aspects, but the most important one is the fact he is not hungry for power or domination. His character changes, not only through a simple shift when his true identity is uncovered, but also through his interactions with the Winchester brothers when he starts to care about them, although he never admits it. Given the long time he has spent on Earth among humans and other gods, he has developed free will of his own, as well as affinity towards humans. Tricking them was just the icing on the cake.

24 Lucifer may be called arguably the most powerful trickster in the *Supernatural* lore, as well as in Christian mythology; after all he tricked Eve in the Garden to taste the fruit from the forbidden tree which caused the downfall of the whole humanity.

Renata Iwicka

Absolwentka Instytutu Filologii Orientalnej, specjalizacja: Japonistyka i Sinologia. Doktor kulturoznawstwa. Głównymi kręgami zainteresowań są: szeroko pojęta demonologia, kultura i historia Azji Wschodniej (zwłaszcza Japonii i Korei), popkultura zachodnia i antropologia.

Afiliacja: Katedra Porównawczych Studiów Cywilizacji UJ

Bibliography

- Carroll M. P., *The Trickster as Sefish-Buffoon and Culture Hero*, "Ethos" 1984, Vol. 12, No. 2.
- Flam A., *Sacred Fool. Schematization of the Narrative Structure of the Trickster Myth*, Bachelor thesis, Stockholm University, 2011.
- Gaudet M., *Bouki, the Hyena, in Louisiana and African Tales*, "The Journal of American Folklore", 1992, Vol. 105, No. 415.
- Hartley J., *Paradigm shifters: tricksters and cultural science*, "Cultural Science Journal" 2010, Vol. 3, No. 1.
- Jung C. G., *On the psychology of the trickster figure*, transl. P. Radin, New York 1972.
- Kremer J. W., *Postmodern Trickster Strands in Shamanic Worlds*, „International Journal of Transpersonal Studies" 2012, Vol. 31, No. 2.
- Mittell J., *Narrative Complexity in Contemporary American Television*, "The Velvet Light Trap" 2006, Vol. 58.
- Porter M. J., Larson D. L., Harthcock A., Nellis K. B., *Re (de)fining Narrative Events Examining Television Narrative Structure*, "Journal of Popular Film and Television" 2002, Vol. 30.
- Ratt S., *Continuing Trickster Storytelling: The Trickster Protagonists of Three Contemporary Indian Narratives*, Master thesis, University of Regina, Saskatchewan 1996.
- Smith A., *Blues, criticism, and the signifying trickster*, "Popular Music" 2005, Vol. 24, No. 2, *Literature and Music*.
- Szokolczai A., *Liminality and Experience: Structuring transitory situations and transformative events*, "International Political Anthropology" 2009, Vol. 2.
- Turner V., *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti structure*, transl. E. Dzurak, Warszawa 2010.
- Waldenfels B., *Podstawowe motywy fenomenologii obcego*, Warszawa 2009.
- Yankah K., *The Akan Trickster Cycle: Myth or Folklore?*, African Studies Program Indiana University, 1983.

Filmography

Supernatural, cw, 2005–.

Abstrakt

Postać trickstera jest z całą pewnością jednym z najbardziej intrygujących i odwiecznych motywów niemal wszystkich kultur świata. W dalszym ciągu jest obecny w literaturze, filmach, serialach telewizyjnych, komiksach. Jedynie wyobrażenia twórcy ogranicza sposoby na jakie ten motyw może być wykorzystany i opowiedziany na nowo. Twórcy serialu *Supernatural* także włączyli tę postać do mitologii serii, tym samym powołując do życia jednego z najbardziej lubianych, ale i najbardziej skomplikowanych bohaterów. Trickster spełnia wiele funkcji w serialu – przyspiesza decyzje dwójki głównych bohaterów, przynosi ze sobą *katharsis*, karze winowajców i oczywiście płać rozmaite żarty. Z drugiej strony zdaje się on stać pomiędzy światami, pojawia się bowiem w przełomowych momentach pomiędzy ważnymi decyzjami. Głównym celem artykułu jest próba analizy roli trickstera w serialu *Supernatural* – jego funkcji, środków działania i wreszcie jego miejsca w światowym kompleksie mitów dotyczących trickstera.